

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(4) for designating different features with the same reference character. In response, applicant has amended FIGURES 1, 3-8, 10, and 11 to provide corrected reference characters. The drawings were also corrected in the following manner in response to various objections recited in the Office Action. The arrow in the left side reference character 15 in FIGURE 1 was changed to a lead line pointing to the feature. The cross-hatching of the building element in FIGURES 2 and 3 has been completed. The hidden lines representing feature 15 in FIGURE 8 has been deleted. The cam portion in FIGURE 7 has been corrected to correspond to the flange portion in Figure 8. The bracket and reference 58 has been deleted.

Replacement Sheets showing FIGURES 1-12 are being submitted concurrently with this amendment.

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REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the above-identified patent application. Claims 1, 2, and 31 have been amended to correct the informalities noted in the Office Action. Claims 1-4, 7, 10, 12-14, 20-22, 27, and 30-31 were amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the present disclosure. Applicant respectfully submits that the claim amendments are fully supported by the specification. Accordingly, Claims 1-8, 10-17, 19-25, and 27-31 are now pending in this application.

In an Office Action dated March 14, 2006 (hereinafter "Office Action"), Claims 1-8, 10-17, 19-25, and 27-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-8, 11-15, 20-25, and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,329,141, issued to Rice (hereinafter "Rice"). Claims 1, 10, 20, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 0 967 425 A1, issued to Chretien, Warscotte, and Mathey (hereinafter "Chretien et al."). Claims 1 and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,197,241, issued to Anthon (hereinafter "Anthon"). Finally, the drawings were objected to for several reasons and Claims 1, 2, and 31 were objected to because of certain informalities.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). Specifically, the Office Action notes that the cooperatively shaped device 12 disposed on the building element 30 (in Claim 10) must be shown or the feature cancelled in the claims. Applicant respectfully submits that the cooperatively shaped device 12, as recited in Claim 10, is shown in Figure 1.

Claim 10 recites a quick connect assembly, "wherein one of the locking members includes an *alignment mechanism*." According to the specification on page 33, lines 28-29,

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"[a]ttached to the cam portion 10 is an *alignment mechanism*, such as a *locating pin 12*." (Emphasis added) Thus, the specification represents at least one embodiment of the alignment mechanism as the locating pin 12, which is depicted in Figure 1. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the objection be withdrawn.

The drawings were also objected to because the reference character 13 in Figures 1 and 12 is not pointing to a surface as the disclosure portrays. In response to this objection, applicant has amended FIGURES 1 and 12 so that the reference character 13 is pointing to a surface.

Claims

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-8, 10-17, 19-25, and 27-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1 and 20 have been amended to more particularly and distinctly point out the claimed subject matter. Specifically, Claims 1 and 20 are now being drawn to a combination of a "quick connect assembly" and the "building element and the mounting member." Claims 2-6, 8, 10-13, 15-17, and 19 depend from Claim 1, and Claims 21-25 and 27-31 depend from Claim 20. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections against Claims 1-8, 10-13, 15-17, 19-25, and 27-31 under § 112, second paragraph.

Regarding Claim 14, the Office Action asserts that the recitation "the second fitting is coupled to the plumbing" indicates that the second fitting is positively claimed; however, none of the previous claims from which Claim 14 depend positively recite the second fitting. Claim 13, from which Claim 14 depends, has been amended to recite "wherein the plumbing includes a first fitting *and a second fitting*, wherein the first fitting is adapted to couple in fluid

communication to the second fitting." Thus, applicant respectfully submits that Claim 13 positively recites the second fitting; and therefore, the objection against Claim 14 under § 112, second paragraph should be withdrawn.

Regarding Claim 7, the Office Action asserts that the recitation "the second locking member is sized and configured so that at least a portion of the second locking member may be positioned within the first passageway of the first locking member" is unclear. Claim 7 has been amended to cure such indefiniteness. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-8, 11-15, 20-25, and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Rice. Claims 1, 10, 20, and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chretien et al. Claims 1 and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Anthon. A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628,631, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Moreover, "the identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 U.S.P.Q.2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). For the following reasons, applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-8, 11-15, 20-25, and 28-31 are not anticipated by Rice, Chretien et al., or Anthon.

Rice purportedly discloses an assembly comprising a bushing 2 and a ring 8 for coupling a tap 11 to a wall 1 of a keg or other container. A connector ring 8 is said to be coupled to the bushing 2 with a "bayonet joint connection." Rice purportedly discloses a single tube 17 that is adapted to project through the barrel 11 and into the container 1. See FIGURES 1 and 8.

Chretien et al. purportedly discloses a quick connect assembly comprising a first locking member 2 and a second locking member 20, wherein the first and second locking members 2 and 20 have cooperative cam locking elements. See FIGURE 6. Chretien et al. is said to further disclose a cable 7 that is routed through the first and second locking members. See FIGURE 6.

Claims 1 and 20 have been amended to recite a first conduit and a second conduit disposed in fluid communication. In contrast to the recitations of amended Claims 1 and 20, Rice purportedly teaches a single conduit (a tube 17), but fails to teach or suggest a second conduit in fluid communication with the first conduit, and Chretien et al. purportedly teaches a cable routing through the connection assembly but fails to teach first and second conduits in fluid communication. Thus, both Rice and Chretien et al. fail to teach or suggest first and second conduits as recited in amended Claims 1 and 20. Thus, for at least this reason, applicant respectfully submits that Rice and Chretien et al. do not teach or suggest the recited combination or features of Claims 1 and 20. Thus, applicant respectfully requests the rejection against Claims 1 and 20 be withdrawn. Further, applicant respectfully requests the rejections to Claims 2-8 and 10-15, and Claims 21-25 and 27-31, which depend from Claim 1 and Claim 20, respectively, be withdrawn.

Anthon purportedly discloses a quick connector C that includes a first locking member, or sleeve 36, and a second locking member, or connector 50. The first and second locking members 36 and 50 are said to have cooperative cam locking elements 37 and 51, respectively. The first locking member 36 is coupled to a panel 14, and the second locking member 50 includes a grip 52 coupled thereto.

Claim 1 recites an environment in which a building element is connected to a mounting member via a quick connect assembly. The quick connect assembly includes a first locking member and a second locking member having co-operative cam locking elements to reversibly

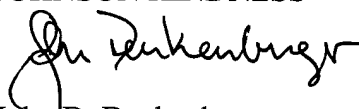
couple the building element to the mounting member. In contrast to Claim 1, the first locking member 36 of Anthon is coupled to a panel 14. However, the second locking member 50 of Anthon is not coupled to one of a building element or a mounting member such that the connection of the first and second locking members 36 and 50 couple the building element to the mounting member.

Thus, applicant respectfully submits that Anthon fails to teach or suggest the recited combination of features recited in Claim 1. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests the rejection against Claim 1 be withdrawn. Further, applicant respectfully requests the rejections to Claims 13-17, which depend from Claim 1, be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant asserts that the claims of the present application recite combinations of features neither suggested nor taught by the prior art. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests early and favorable action, and the allowance of all pending claims. If any further questions remain, the Examiner is invited to telephone applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed envelope as first-class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the below date.

Date: September 14, 2006 Carolyn Igniash

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